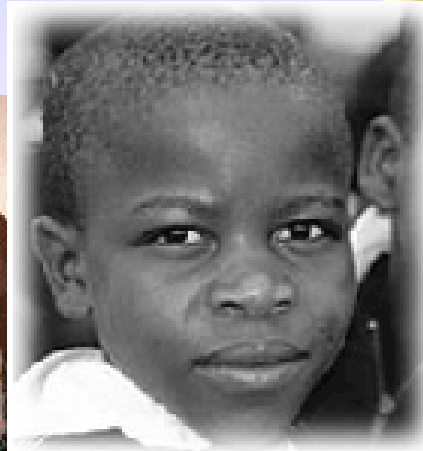


THE PTOLEMY PROJECT

Research Community Building in Africa



INTERNATIONAL COALITION OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA
ICOLC 

Barcelona 2004

THE PTOLEMY PROJECT: Research Community Building in Africa
http://www.utoronto.ca/ois/myweb9/about_ptolemy.htm

1

WHY PTOLEMY? HISTORY 101

The museum Ptolemy established in Alexandria was in effect the first university in the world.

It was dedicated to the service of the Muses. It was a religious body only in form, in order to meet the legal difficulties of endowment in a world that had never foreseen such a thing as a secular intellectual process.

It was essentially a college of learned *men* engaged chiefly in research and record, but also to a certain extent teaching.



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A COMMUNITY OF MEDICAL CURIOSITY

In order to improve the health of people in the developing world, it is important that researchers there have access to the peer-reviewed medical literature originating in the developed world, as well as to the journals and texts originating all over the developing world.



the need for electronic health information



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PTOLEMY MECHANISMS: PARTNERSHIPS

East African Surgical Initiative – Delphi Project, (EASI-Delphi)

Association of Surgeons of East Africa (ASEA)

College of Surgeons of East Central and Southern Africa
(COSECSA) <http://www.asea.org.mz/>

University of Toronto (UofT)

<http://www.utoronto.ca>

University of Toronto Libraries (UTL)

<http://www.library.utoronto.ca>

Office of International Surgery (OIS)

<http://www.utoronto.ca/ois/>



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO



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THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Largest university in Canada — 55,000 students

St. George campus +

2 suburban campuses (east and west of the city center)

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

Largest library in Canada

Ranks in the top 5 of the ARL listings (American Research Libraries)

Comprised of central libraries and

35 college, faculty & department libraries

13,000,000 volumes (books & microforms)

30,000 current print sales



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COUNTRY PARTICIPANTS

Ethiopia
Kenya
Malawi
Tanzania
Zambia
Zimbabwe
Mozambique

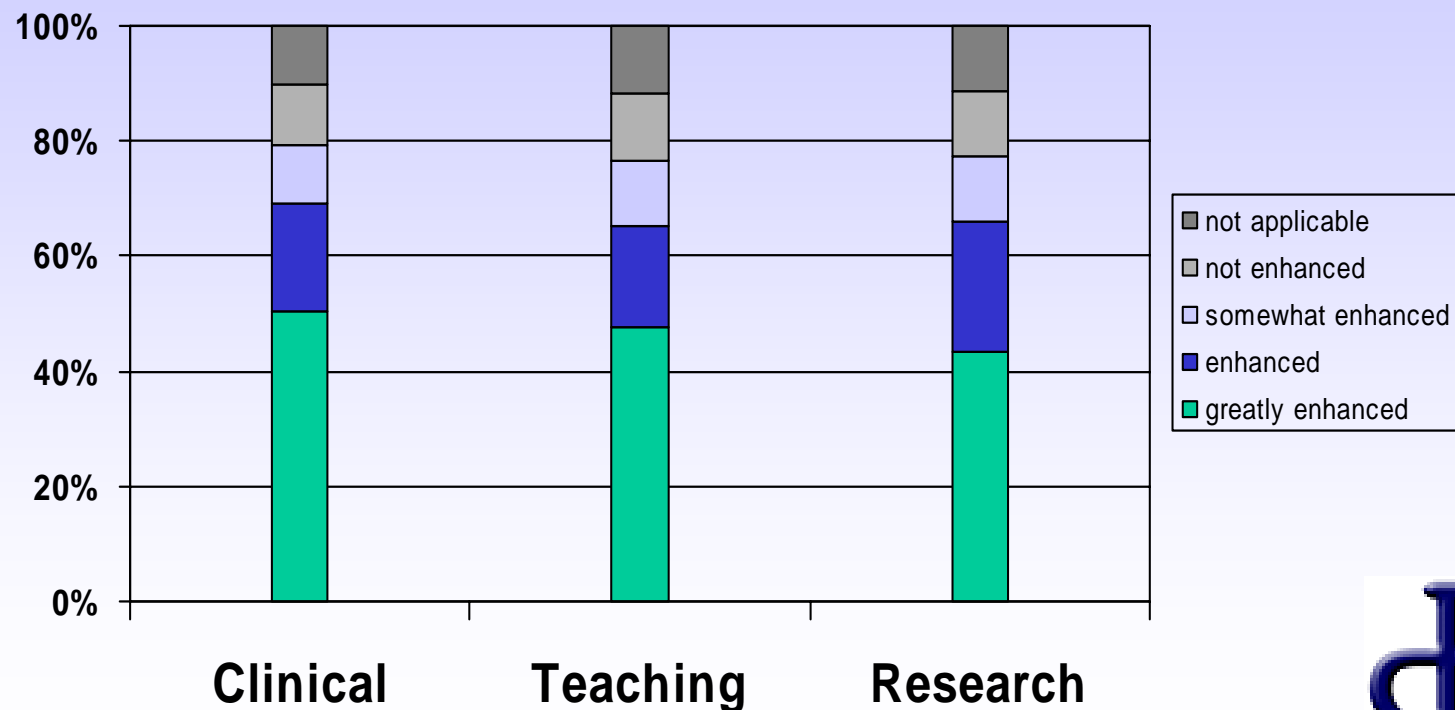


Eastern and Southern Africa



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Impact on different areas of practice



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COMPARISON WITH HINARI

The Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative (HINARI) provides free or very low cost online access to the major journals in biomedical and related social sciences to local, non-profit institutions in developing countries.

HINARI

service product
> 1000 institutions
publisher based
institutions only
broad audience
? uptake
? cost

PTOLEMY

research product
150 individuals linked to UofT
library based
home access
well defined users
electronic publishing (Bioline)
low cost & readably replicable

builds a community



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OUTCOMES FROM PARTICIPANTS

150 participants in total to date

Spent an average of 3-6 hours per month on Ptolemy

$\frac{3}{4}$ of the access of Ptolemy was from home or home + work

Spent on average about \$50.00 U.S. a month

Read more now

Preference for western journals:

British Journal of Science (BJS)

NEJM

Lancet

Annals

33 presentations, papers and chapters (as of September 2003)



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PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES

"Up until I joined the Ptolemy project, I was only using abstracts for my work. This made life difficult, and my publication record to date is not good. The last good paper I published was in 2000, when I finished my PhD. I certainly regretted going back home to Africa as I thought my academic career was over. I now know that I will be up to date, and I will certainly come up with innovative research proposals."

JC (Malawi)



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PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES

"I am writing my dissertation for a masters in public health, and Ptolemy is assisting me at just the correct time."
MS (Tanzania)

"I am very much interested in medical education, especially clinical education. The Ptolemy project helped me to find relevant information about the subject. It should be noted that, due to financial difficulties, we do not subscribe to any medical education journals."
PG (Mozambique)

Our library is poor in Lusaka, Zambia—no journals or books. Ptolemy opened for me a new world of knowledge. Like a child in a toy shop. It is difficult to stop once you start browsing. Unfortunately internet connection is often very poor, and downloading or opening a page is difficult. That is the time when I stop. Preparing a lecture in wound healing, I performed almost entirely from Ptolemy."
GJ (Zambia)



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FUTURE DIRECTIONS

HINARI region

CIHR Global Health Research Grant

URL analysis

COSECSA Candidates' Group

Open access archiving

Survey of medical students

Neurosurgeons / Paediatricians

REPLICATION!



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